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MEDORA.

Darcy

MEDORA;

OR,

THE MAID OF SICILY.

A Tragedy, in Five Acts.

BY ANNIE D'ARCY.

With Stage Business, Cast of Characters, Costumes, Relative Positions, Etc.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ARANA	*A powerful Noble of Sicily.*
ORSINI	*The Lover of Medora.*
PIETRO	*The Friend of Orsini.*
MARCO	*Lieutenant of Orsini.*
PAULO, CARLO, STEPHANO	*Soldiers of Arana.*
MEDORA	*Betrothed to Orsini.*

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COSTUMES.

THE SCENES ARE LAID IN SICILY DURING THE MIDDLE AGES.

ARANA.—First Dress: Crimson shirt.
Second Dress: Suit of mail—black and gold.

ORSINI—First Dress: Brown merino shirt and sandals.
Second Dress: Suit of mail—crimson and silver—with crimson scarf.

STEPHANO.—Same as ARANA, but plainer.

PAULO.—Shirt and breastplate.

MARCO.—Same as PAULO—colors different.

PIETRO.—Shirt of mail—black and steel.

KNIGHTS AND SOLDIERS.—Shirts of mail and high boots.

MEDORA.—White merino dress; demi-train; hanging-sleeves, lined with crimson and trimmed with gold. Grecian curls.

MEDORA.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The Battlements of the Castle of Arana, on the Coast of Sicily.

Enter Carlo, *followed by* Pietro, R. S. E.

Carlo. No more ; 'tis vain !

Pietro. Be not a fool unto thyself ;
What gold can do to win thee shall be done ;
Spare my friend who is no foe of thine.
The tyrant whose will holds lordly sway
Within these towers will never know the
Cheat thy tenderness imposes.
Release the friend whose boyhood
Cheered mine !

Carlo. Urge me not. I would, but
Dare not. The brave Orsini is hated
By the lord who holds him in his grasp,
And vengeance would be dire on all
Who aid him now.

Pietro. Detested villain ! And will the gallant
Carlo serve a monster whom nor laws
Of manhood nor of war hold in check ?
My friend, I mistook thy nature.

Carlo. No, not my nature, but my duty,
Rather.

Pietro. One word more : Orsini has not,
As some fearful rumors say, fallen by
The assassin's steel ?

Carlo. He lives. But the Lady Medora's
Advent in these walls is untimely ; her
Pleading to Arana's gloomy breast, I

Fear, will not redeem her lover from
One pang reserved within the doom
His captor meditates.

Pietro. If any spark of virtue dwells within thee,
Lead me, Carlo—show me the dungeon of
My friend!

Carlo. On the summit of the rock which faces
Westward from these battlements, is scooped
A cell of fatal horror, where lingering captives
Oft have sighed in vain—where Death's
Cold hand alone could play the liberator.

Pietro. Fell villain! Is this the end reserved
For the noble, brave Orsini? O gentle,
Loving Medora! in vain, I fear, indeed,
Will be thy words, though soft as music's
Sweetest notes, and all thy prayers of
Love and grief, to shield thy lover from
The steel he never feared in battle,
When—

Enter PAULO, L.

Paulo. Where is our chief?
Our forces, beaten back within the walls,
Were met and hotly followed by
A slaughtering band of Orsini's fiercest
Horde! Haste to the rescue!
No time for parley! I must seek Arana's
Presence! [*Crosses* R., *and exits, followed by* CARLO.

Pietro. Just Heavens, look down and aid
The captive now, shower your vengeance
On the head of foul oppression, and
Paralyze the murderer's desperate arm!
[*Noise and confusion heard without, shouts, etc.*

Enter MEDORA, L. U E.

Medora. Victorious heroes!
Brave followers of Orsini's banner!
Let the wild tempest rage, till in one
Wide o'erwhelming ruin scattered,
Lie all the savage forces of Arana's pride,
And freed Orsini leaps joyous to these arms!

Pietro. And grant the moment when Pietro's steel
Shall from its scabbard leap, and cut
A path of freedom for his friend!

Medora. E'en whilst I shudder, my soul in daring seems
To tower, Pietro, at the sweet, wild thought of
Orsini free!

Pietro. Brave maid of Sicily! Well may that
Title be bestowed on thee; for not a warrior
Of more courageous soul bears brand within
This isle. Nor aught so tender blooms beneath its shades

Medora. And yet a dread—a pale horror—
Doth oppress that spirit which thou
Laudest thus. But still the gallant
Marco, the brave lieutenant of Orsini,
Comes, armed with the power of his captive
Lord. Eager to redress,
He leads the war; and grant him victory, Heaven!
A little while, and then, within
These cursed walls, triumphant
Let him stand! [*Crosses* L.

Pietro. And yet I fear for thee.
Would thou wert safe in some
Distant retreat, where——

Medora Here let me always be, until
My brave, my noble, generous Orsini bear
Me hence. His freedom, bought with the
Dearest blood that courses through
These veins, were cheap. Let Heaven, who knows
Each secret feeling of my soul—the agony that
Rends it—witness my resolve!
Could I desert the being I adore?—
The lover of my girlhood—the husband
Of my heart? I sought Arana's presence,
And prayed to him for mercy;
Implored him spare the noble victim that
Chance of battle thus had cast in
Fetters at his feet. Nay, besought the
Tyrant to permit my aching heart to seek
His dungeon—my hands to bathe his fevered
Brow and bind his wounds!

Pietro. That act of tenderness and truth,
Though never done, shall merit all
That Heaven can bestow.

Medora. Ye Powers above, in freedom let
Me once more behold him!
If he be free, Medora is content to die.

Pietro. Far from me be the thought to add
One fear unto thy breast; but
Dread misgivings——

Medora. No more, Pietro; in pity say no
More! The flame that glows within me
Ne'er shall know despair—ne'er be quenched!
Despondent man! The furious tyrant,

In his den of blood, is caught at
Last. Ruin on every side encompasses
These walls. His haughty and oppressive soul
Will grovel in the dust before
The shining brands Orsini's heroes
Wield, and death reward him in the
Fatal hour! [*Crosses* R.

Pietro. The tyrant comes, lady! Disguise
All feeling—drown all your sorrows in
A show of joy. At least, restrain your
Detestation for your foe. Lady, he comes.

Enter ARANA, STEPHANO, *and four* KNIGHTS.

Arana. The vain, accursed Orsini!
He at least, is in my grasp. The foe
I hate is in my power. Then, let his
Myrmidons battle their fill. These towers
Are lofty, and these walls are strong.
In vain ye thunder at their gates.
Sooner than yield them to the
Victorious arms of base Orsini, with my
Own hand I'd throw the burning brand,
And in one wide, consuming ruin
Behold their blackened stones and scorching
Beams! [*Crosses* L.

Medora. Oh, Arana! if anguish tortures my
Distracted breast—if frenzy holds
Fearful sway within this brain—
Pity, oh! pity my despair. My grief
Is madness! I cannot know relief.
All miseries are mine, until my prayers
Have gained favor in thy heart. Reserve
Thy vengeance! Evince a brave revenge!
Preserve thy foe, and take an humble
Maiden's thanks—the unutterable thankfulness
Of a breaking heart!
Oh! spare him—spare Orsini—and
Medora shall live but to bless
Thy name. Be merciful, my lord!

Arana. [*Aside.*] Her beauty maddens me; yet not
Unwilling love I covet. Could I win her, by Heaven,
A double vengeance would be mine, and I
Could crush the very heart within Orsini's breast!
Her loveliness makes my hatred more!
Has he not outdone me in manhood's
Noblest chase, ambition's aim, crossed me
In my boldest schemes, derided me among

My peers, and o'erthrown me in the
Battle's heat?
But, stay—I must dissemble!
[C.] Divine Medora! [*Aloud.*
Do not deem me cruel; accuse me not
Of aught that would distress thy tender
Bosom! Believe me, I would give
All freedom to Orsini; but my followers
Demand, for many a wanton act of
Cruelty of his when red battle had
Rendered him triumphant, that he
Shall pay the forfeit!
Still, thy youth, thy grief, thy beauty,
Pierce me with a thousand darts;
And for one look of pity for the
Wounds thy loveliness inflict, I'd kneel
Before thee, renounce my vengeance,
Turn recreant to my followers, and
Be thy willing, loving, and devoted
Slave! [*Takes her hand.*

Medora. [R. C.] Direct me now, ye Heavenly Powers!
My lord, seek not to win a heart
I cannot give. My love, thou knowest,
Is another's. Orsini is my affianced
Lord. He owns my heart, and where
That goes, my hand goes also.
[*Withdraws her hand, and crosses* L.

Enter PAULO, R.

Paulo. My lord!
Arana. How now?
Paulo. The enemy scales the western battlements;
Our men, exhausted with the desperate work, in
Under-breathing murmur forth thy name,
And crave thy presence and inspiring voice.
Arana. I come. [*Exit* PAULO, R.—*Shouts without.*
Medora, farewell! Within this hour I'll seek
Thy presence, and again implore thy
Love.
Medora. In vain! My lord, these words of thine
Are insults to my ear! My love, my heart,
My soul, are all Orsini's own!
Sooner than yield a single look of love
To thee—the direst foe of him whose
Lightest tones to me were rapturous as
An angel-choir—I'd fling this form from
Off these battlements, and lie a

Mangled, shapeless mass, within yon
Dark abyss!

Arana. Beware! or, if not thine own, Orsini's form shall
Greet thy eye, within yon chasm, ere
To-morrow's sun. [*Exit* R., *followed by* KNIGHTS.

Medora. Hold back, despair!
If my lover dies, why, then—
Mercy, Heaven! I cannot bear the
Fearful thought! The weakness of my
Sex forbids my arm to strike!
Great Powers, defend the righteous now!
Let not yon guilt-stained villain
Prosper in the fight,
Or nerve this woman's arm and steel her heart
To deeds of horror and revenge! [*Exit* L.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Another part of the Battlements—A Tower on the Left.

Carlo *discovered guarding the entrance of the tower.*

Carlo. Who's there? Stand! Who, and what art thou?

Enter Medora, r. u. e.

Medora. No hostile foot approaches. In me no warlike
Valor can alarm. I am a
Friend. No stealthy foe is here to surprise
Thy watch. A lowly suppliant I come.
Alas; my strength forsakes my weary frame.
Carlo. Thine intent! unfold! quick, speak
Thy purpose here.
Medora. Let not distrust annoy thy breast,
A miserable woman in her anguish comes to
Thee, and at thy feet implores thy aid. Thou
Hast the power. Relieve this bleeding heart.
Show mercy to my woe.
Carlo. Why, lady, will thou thus, when
All nature is burried in repose, forsake
Thy couch of rest?
Medora. All, all may rest in peace when
Naught disturbs the heart; but when ten
Thousand pangs are torturing the soul, how
Vain the hope for quiet. Oh! give
Me but to see him. Within this gloomy
Tower I know he pines in misery, and
How can I find comfort for agony like
Mine?
Carlo. Lady, I dare not, or if—
Medora. To do this act would be a virtue,
. If ever thou hast known the power
Of love—the tortures of suspense—aid
The suppliant being at thy feet.
Were she thou lovest pleading at another's
Feet, as I at thine, for one slight interview
With thee, think, how wouldst thou feel
To know repulse would be her sole
Reward. ! yield, in mercy,

Yield to my demand.
I know thy generous soul would, were
That thy fate, yearn as mine does now,
And feel a power within it to rend
Rocks of marble to attain its end.
Think these fears and dreads thine own,
And pity mine. [*Rises.*

Carlo. Withdraw, withdraw, I dare not;
Thy tears and prayers are vain.

Medora. What! has murder done its
Foul work, then? Assassins, have
Ye destroyed the form I love? [*Crosses* R.

Carlo. This wild, distracting grief is vain;
Retire and seek repose.

Medora. Thinkst thou, inhuman as thou art,
These limbs can know repose, this heart
Assuage its pangs? Never! at thy feet
A bleeding corse I'll lie, and leave the
Guilt of murder on thy soul. By all
The cruel fates that ever severed
Faithful loves, I swear to crimson
With my heart's warm blood the fearful
Threshold of Orsini dungeon!
[*Drawing her dagger and kneeling.*

Carlo. Hold! hold! I yield.
[*Raising her*] Enter; such faithfulness
Would melt the savage breast of tigers.

Medora. My tears alone can requite thy goodness
And speak my thanks.

Carlo. Yon lamp will guide thy steps.
[*Pointing through the archway of the tower.*

Medora. This act shall be rewarded. The
Heavens will recompense thy generous
Virtue, for Heaven commends the deed.
[*Enters the tower.*

Carlo. My faith to Arana's broken, but
My duty to the suffering of a bleeding
Heart is done, and what the forfeit
May be, I'll pay freely. [*Exit* L.

SCENE II.—Change of scene—Inside of Orsini's Dungeon.

Orsini *and* Medora *discovered. The former in chains.*

Orsini. And didst thou then, to gaze upon
Me once again, my own Medora, dare all
The wrath the tyrant could inflict?

And do I hold within my fettered
Arms the being I adore?

Medora. Oh, my beloved!

Orsini. Medora! Heavens, do I hold her
In these arms again. Are all my
Dreams of horror then dispelled? I thank
Thee, Heaven, for thus bestowing upon my
Heart a boon like this.

Medora. Thy own lieutenant, Marco, closely
Besieges this stronghold of our foe,
And Arana dreads success will crown his
Efforts.

Orsini. If fate should not decree success,
As thou depicts, unto the arms of
Faithful Marco—if these limbs should
Never know freedom more, and this
Dungeon should become my tomb—Medora,
What doom awaits *thee*, then? My heart
Recoils with horror at the thought!

Medora. I have no fear but what attends
Thy fate, Orsini! no thought but for
Thy freedom. When thou art gone—when
Earth beholds thee no more—then is Medora's
Life a worthless burthen. Then will she
Seek the grave, where sorrows end!
Our souls may reunite above, and
Joys eternal be our own.

Orsini. But if Arana—and well
I know the villain would not scruple, for
No honor dwells within his breast—if Arana,
Bloated with triumph and gloating on
Revenge, should dare to ask thy love,
Thy——

Medora. I have a dagger, and no female
Weakness shall intervene to withhold my
Hand. When thou art lost, then all is gone,
And Arana would behold Medora's lifeless
Form, but never know her love!

Orsini. Sure faith like thine is rare even in the
Brightest of thy sex.
When stricken down beneath the sword of Arana's band,
And rescue was in vain—when dragged before
My foe, and manacled and wounded,
And plunged into this cell—my thoughts
Were wandering to thee. I painted thee, in fancy,
In a thousand ways. I deemed that fate
Might crush thee, as it had thy lover—
That thy woman's strength could not resist

The pressure of misfortune's direful strokes ;
And that, exhausted, thou wouldst sink
Beneath th' accumulated woes, too heavy
To be borne by gentleness like thine. I knew
Thee tender, loving, virtuous, and true—
I did not deem thee the heroic maid I
Find thee now. Heaven forefend a fate
That made Lucretia's name immortal should
Be thine, my love. If death unto thy
Lover be the worst that can ensue,
I care not ; but 'tis hard, in the full
Flush of love, of manhood, and of manhood's
Hopes, to die. Yet, Medora, should that
Indeed be the doom in store for me, seek out
The faithful Marco ; tell him to lead thee
To the cot deep-hidden in Sicilian wilds,
Where the fond, attached, and faithful being—
The foster-mother of Orsini—dwells ; and there
Deliver thee in trust to her whose tenderness
Watch'd o'er my infancy, guarded the
Footsteps of my boyhood, and loved me
As her son. Tell her that my dying care
Transferred thee to her own.

Medora. Oh, peace, Orsini! Let not these
Gloomy thoughts distract thy breast. A day
Of freedom, of happiness and love, methinks,
Will yet be ours ; when we may seek
The sweet security together, and bury in obscurity
And bliss all memory of former woe. Let war
And all its fierce alarms forever cease, and in our
Own delight, we will forget that ever they existed.
For obscurity and peace, within some vale,
Secluded from the angry blasts that do disturb
This sad and boisterous world, are surely
Boons to be desired. To dwell beside some
Gentle stream, whose banks lend rich odors
To the wooing winds, where all the rich
Tints and gentle joys that deck the
Teeming earth may be our own, and where,
When night's star-lit dome of azure
Softness beams above, with joined hands and
Joyous hearts we'll thank the All-Wise
Being who rules the universe for ' the
Calm delights that such existence knows.
And when our earthly course be run, we'll hope
That that clear heaven shall be our home
Forever ! But why despondent dost thou hang
Thy head, and why do gloomy thoughts o'ershade

Thy brow? Tell me, Orsini, does the
Picture I so feebly draw delight thee not? Has
Medora no power to charm the sadness from
Thy soul?

Orsini. Thy words, my gentle one, are balm to
Heal a thousand hearts, though
Rack'd and bleeding with a thousand doubts
And fears. No, my Medora, we will not
Yield to woe; we will be merry, love.
What matters these chains of iron—
These walls of solid blackness, and the
Tyrant's will, that dooms my freedom
To their horrid bondage. Marco—my
Faithful Marco—well can lead my men
To conquest; and Pietro, though seemingly the
Faithful vassal of Arana, is my foster-brother,
As thou knowest;—none within these walls
Suspect Pietro—do they, dearest?

Medora. None; he came a stranger
From a far-distant part of Italy.
at hearing of thy capture.
None know him, and Arana deems
Him a willing tool to work his will.
So far, all favors the dear-sought object
Of my heart. With thee and freedom
That I cannot doubt, Orsini. This aching
Bosom that panteth now with hope
And visions of a future bliss——

[*Enter* CARLO, L.

Carlo. No longer must this interview
Be held. Arana questions · suspects,
And seeks even now this lady's presence.

Orsini. How! what!

Medora. I come, , faithful friend.
He knows not of this stealthy interview,
Does he, ?

Carlo. No; but he marvels that thy presence
Does not adorn the banquet, where.
Surrounded by some followers, choice and
Familiar friends, he quaffs his Greek wine
In heavy draughts, drinking success unto his
Arms, and confusion to his foes. Thrice has
He dispatched Pietro to bring thee to
The Hall, and now, with savage oaths,
He wonders at thy obstinacy.

Medora. What shall I do? Tell me, Orsini.

Orsini. Stir not. Remain, Medora.
Here let the villain seek thee out. Lend

Me thy dagger.

Medora. No, no. Let not rashness counsel aught;
Cool judgment now must aid our cause.
conduct me to thy master, and the
Secret of this act of mercy unto two
Distracted souls shall never be divulged.
If fortune ever favors those in misery now,
Rest well assured thy recompense is
Certain.

Carlo. Enough, lady, my heart applauds
The deed I've done, and richer recompense
Than that I seek not.

Medora. Farewell, my Orsini! [*Rushing into his arms.*

Orsini. Adieu, my love!

Medora. Remember, whatever fate has yet
In store of woe for me, the truth and
Endless love of her now folded to thy
Breast. Farewell. [*Exeunt* MEDORA *and* CARLO.

Orsini. Propitious fates, be guardians of her
Steps. Conduct her through the ordeal
That love and truth demand. Upon Arana's
Head pour down your wrath, eternal
Powers. Oh, my Medora, how welcome were
All the horrors of this dungeon and captivity, if
Thy tender breast were but secured from
All the wild suspense that harrows every
Thought. Grant me freedom, Heaven. Grant
Success unto Marco's arms. Shower destruction
On our foes. Let not the faithfulness, the love, the
Devotion, of the being I adore be unavailing. Let
Not her tears be shed for naught; her tenderness
Be repaid with black despair; her
Watchfulness and all her fears end in unredeemed woe!

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The Banqueting Hall in the Castle Arana.

Stephano, Knights, Guests *and* Revellers *discovered seated.*

Arana. Drain your goblets: quaff to the success of
Our arms! Down with Orsini!
All. Down with Orsini!
Arana. Where is Pietro?
Stephano. Not returned, my lord.
Arana. Seek him, Stephano. [*Exit* Stephano, L.
The generous juice of Cyprus vineyards
Thrills my heart: my blood runs hot, and
Madly through my veins; in vain the strugglings
Of reluctant honor, Medora must be mine. This
Night shall seal Orsini's doom; all the wealth of
Gold untold cannot redeem him; too long like a
Fearful fool, I've tarried in the act. I've nought
To gain by mercy; no, be that the
Coward's virtue. Yet hold, will slaying him
Win the way to Medora's heart? Bah! what
Care I for the heart. Her form is all I ask.
I *will* possess that beauteous form; no power
Can stay my hand. No voice deny my will
Within these walls. And yet I would not have my
Memory blackened by deeds of infamy that
No future course can [illegible] hide from
The prying eye of busy censure; and yet,
She will not let act of priesthood e'en give
Sanction to my love. Nor laws of church,
Nor man shall keep her from my arms—she
Shall be mine! Drink, followers of Arana.
Drink to the fair Medora, the mistress
Of your chief!
All. To the fair Medora, the mistress of our chief!
Arana. The mistress of your chief!

R., *enter* Medora, *preceded by* Pietro *and* Stephano.

Arana. Ah, she comes! Welcome to the banquet.
Medora. My lord, I am no fit guest in hall like
This. Why insult the helpless? the rudest soldier

In thy hand would pause e'er he would offer
Useless, wanton insults to a captive!

Arana. Yet a willing one. [*Comes down the stage.*

Medora. False!

Arana. Free were they thy steps, when thou did'st seek
These walls

Medora. And the heart that urged my feet to
Seek them ne'er so doubted knighthood, honor, manhood,
As to deem thou couldst detain them when its will
Would take them hence; what would'st thou? speak,
And end this conference, abhorrent to my nature
And idle as abhorrent.

Arana. Idle! then thou guessest at my wish, and
Hast resolved to dare my—yet beware; I
Hold Orsini's life within my grasp, one word of
Thine can hasten on the doom I meditate, or set him
Free forever.

Medora. How! free? Speak Arana; say that
Word again, and though the tongue that utters
It in the same breath should order this frail
Frame to tortures and to death, I'll bless it for the
Word.

Arana. Be mine?

Medora. Never!

Arana. Then Orsini dies Dies within this hour.

Medora. Here on my limbs waste all the torture of
The murderer's art; let new systems of torments
Be essayed, and in the pangs that rend
And agonize me then, I'll bless thy name, Arana,
If thou wilt free Orsini! Think in your dread
Dungeon where loathsome reptiles, creatures of slime
And darkness, are his sole companions, how that
Gallant spirit yearns for liberty, think amid thy
Cups of this, and let one gleam of mercy
Penetrate thy soul. He was an open foe; had
Chance of battle laid thee fettered at his feet,
Dost deem he would have held thee thus?
Canst think he could have joyed to know thy
Spirit pined in misery; that thy limbs were
Galled by the biting chain, and the uncouth
Savagery of goalers was all the language
Met thy ear? No solace to thy breast,
From outward showing of thy fellow-man from
Opening morn to weary eve?
Oh, Arana! think when at the judgment seat
Of the All-seeing, thou stand'st in the final hour,
What will the horror of thy soul be then? when
In avenging tones thy cruel deeds are all

Retold, and an eternal doom pronounced upon thy
Head; when no remorse can save thee; no suppliant
Tone can aid thee! for thy soul's sake—
Arana, pity and aid the captive in thy power.

Arana. In vain! thy pleadings are in vain.
Dost think, that for a maiden's whim, the
Foolish fancy of a woman's heart, I'd part
With all that fortune flings into my hand?
Well can'st thou play the pleader; but try
Thy skill on simpler souls; my heart thy
Beauty vanquishes, but thy logic never can
Convince my reason, although I'd almost
Change places with my deadly foe, to know
Such lovely lips, with such sweet eloquence,
Would plead for me; but were such my aught
Dreary fate, how vain the thought that ~~even~~
Of tenderness or pity could be felt by thee, or uttered
By thy lips; no, lady; when power is held in an
Enemy's hand, I well know how easily the heart
Finds words to flatter and to fawn. What wouldst
Thou give to free thy lover? Be generous, and
The morrow's sun sees him in safety far beyond
These walls.

Medora. My life.

Arana. Thyself.

Medora. Monster! sooner the cold coil of the
Serpent shall entwine my form, than thy loathed
Arms embrace me. No, my Orsini! death
Comes but once; life dies, but honor is immortal.
Then welcome all this tyrant can inflict.
Together shall our souls seek a higher world, where infamy
Like his can never come; where sorrows cease, and
And all thy schemes and bloody acts are registered,
Thou slave. [*Crosses*, R.

Arana. Vengeance! eternal furies! quick, Stephano!
Bring the prisoner before me! In chains,
Let him make a sport for us; his blood shall
Stain our banquet hall; and when the purple
Tide is gushing forth; then, woman, shalt thou
Know, and know in vain, one act, one word of
Thine had saved him. [*Exit* STEPHANO, R.

Medora. Mercy! Oh, call thy minion back!

Arana. Be mine!

Medora. Never; no horror like to that.

Arana. I'll torture him before thy face,
In slowest agonies, thou shalt behold him
Pant his life away, and call on thee to save him.

Medora. Oh Heaven, where are thy lightnings; where

Are thy thunderbolts: my brain is
Maddened by his impious rage; [*Aside.*
Arana, hear me;
What fell wickedness is thine: what fiend possesses
All thy soul? Do not this deed of blood; bid me do
Some fearful thing too direful for aught but fiend to
Fancy, or madness to achieve, and I will do it, but spare
The man I love: there are deeds too black to name in
Sin's dread catalogue, too fearful for the memory
Of hatred, too wild for e'en a maniac's dream,
And this is one! [*Crosses* L.

Arana. Medora! I yet will spare my foe if thou—
I will not stain me with his blood, if thou wilt
Show one gleam of hope, if thou wilt bid me live in
Hope of gaining one slight feeling of compassion for my
Woe. Thou dost mistake my nature to suppose
All harshness dwells within my breast; [illegible]
[illegible], but love for thee doth banish
Every other thought, and renders fierce my hate
For every obstacle, that baffles it. My form is
Manly as Orsini's, my arm as daring, and my heart
As firm; my love, my faith, as lasting. Say,
Then, what is it, that thou seekest more than that?
All that wealth can give, if splendor doth delight thee,
Shall be thine; thou shalt rule o'er domains as
Fair and broad as any lie beneath Sicilian
Sun. No form of grandeur shall be foreign to thy
Ken, and all I ask in recompense, is to be thy
Slave! Pause, e'er thy speakest; think what
Thou wilt be then! The lady of Arana's towers
Were peer of any dame in Italy.

Medora. I cannot, will not give a cold, consenting
Form, when certain loathing would accompany the
Boon. I have no love, but for you captive whose chains
Are clanking in thy dungeons. No wish, but for
His freedom. Take my life, and freely, for
The gift I covet. Thou ne'er canst hope for more!

Arana. Enough! Now hear my last resolve:
Orsini dies to-night; I tell thee this in calmness, not
In rage. Ponder on the thought; when the
Bell's solemn note has tolled the midnight hour,
Thou shalt behold his corse, bloody and
Mangled at thy feet. Remember, I am no boy
To boast and act not.
Where are the slaves? Ho! linger ye? Who waits
Without there? [*Crosses*, R.

Medora. Yet, yet, in mercy, pause awhile,
Forget not that thou canst not shape thine

Ends so, but they may be baiked
In the moment of thy triumph What
Act of sin e'er yet escaped the penalty awarded
Unto crime? [*Retires*, L.

Enter STEPHANO, R. 1 E.

Stephano. My Lord, the prisoner——
Arana. Speak, sir, what of him?
Stephano. Cannot be found. His cell is empty.
All search within the walls has been made
In vain.
Arana. Villain! traitors! where are the traitors, who
Have freed him? A thousand curses on thy tongue
For telling me the news. Hence! why stand'st thou
Gaping here? Rouse all my followers. A thousand
Ducats for Orsini's head. His life! his life!

[*Exit* STEPHANO, *and all but* ARANA *and* MEDORA.

But thou art still my prisoner, [*To* MEDORA] and
In thee I am revenged. Is this the gallant,
Brave, noble lover whom thou boasted of,
To forsake his mistress in his foeman's power,
To seek safety by a flight, and leave
Her to any doom, he cares not what?
Medora. Thou slanderer! Orsini's soul is true and
Great as thine is contemptible and false. I *know*
His truth, his worth; and in that knowledge lie
The abhorrence, the pity I conceive for thee,

[*Crosses*, R.

Arana. Beware! Goad not the lion in his den;
Humility, not pride, befit thee now, and
Pleadings, not insult, were better on thy tongue.
But I will forgive thee all, if thou'lt relent;
All that an ardent love can offer shall be thine.
If not, from these walls *thou*, at least, shall ne'er escape,
And in some cell, whose horrors will be tenfold
Greater than all thou dost imagine of imprisonment,
I'll hold thee captive until thou'lt kneel
For mercy to the man thou scornest now;
For he whom thou hatest has the power to
Keep good every threat he utters.
Medora. I care not: thou canst not make me
Yield, nor hate thee less. Hear me, ye Heavens!
Ere I relent unto this man of horror, doom me
To fearfullest torments, consign my limbs to
Agonies untold, forsake me in my direst
Need, condemn me here and hereafter;

Let the vilest slave that ever hugged his fetters
Be a creature of joy excessive, a being to
Be worshipped, an idol of adoration to all
Coming time, compared to her who utters this
Relentless vow. There is no power in manhood's
Might to alter my resolve ; nought the heart
Of cunning'st guile can utter or conceive, to make me
Change or qualify the oath. [*Crosses*, L.

Enter CARLO.

Carlo. My lord, the sentinels avow, that under
Cover of the darkness, the enemy has retreated
From the siege. Stillness has succeeded
All assaults against these battlements, and
Sombre silence now possesses all the scene.

Arana. Ah ! Hearest thou that. Medora ? thy lover's
End is gained. His daring followers are
Worthy of their lord ; their flight is worthy of
His leading. Who ever served a nobler chief ?
What vassal ever served a braver peer ? what
Maiden ever loved a truer swain, a more
Devoted knight ? I marvel that thou dost
Not kneel, and idolize some form thy fancy
Shapes ; some creature of the *wingéd* tribe
Would well. methinks, portray the god
Thy morbid heart reveres. [*Exit* CARLO.
Now, lady. I will leave thee to the sweet
Thoughts thy bosom cherishes. Dwell upon his
Tenderness, and ne'er forget his truth. [*Exit*, R.

Medora. What means this action of Orsini ? He
Cannot be recreant to his vows ! with
Freedom, he never can forget his love ! No ! shame
Upon this heart for conception of the thought.
He seeks some way e'en now, whereby, doubtless,
He can redeem me from Arana's power.
E'en now he seeks some opening for
The freedom of his love, and plots the
Means to baffle the destroyer. Oh ! woman,
How frail art thou in mild contentment's day !
How fragile in the hour of peace ; how tender
In thy domestic joys ; but when love doth
Nerve thee to acts of strangeness to thy
Nature : how ready to assume the part
Assigned thee ; be it fearful as the
Roman's leap through Etna's fiery
Jaws !
Oh, night ! that hides my love, secure

Him in thine arms! Shield with thy mantle of
Blackness the form that I adore! Let every star
That decks thy solemn dome guide his steps
To safety; and when thy shadows leave the
Earth, then let the morrow's sun herald him
To conquest and Medora!

Re-enter ARANA, R., *overhearing latter part of her speech.*

Arana. What, exultation is the theme? what sanguine
Soul is thine! Vain maid, and canst thou still
Delight in vision of a fancied bliss, when every
Hope has flown? Fate shows no mercy to a
Love like thine; thou'rt doomed to woe, if still
Thy stubbornness persist to worship that thou ne'er
Shalt again behold!

Medora. Taunt me as thou wilt, thy words
Can not distract one thought of love from him,
Nor lend one pang to prey upon my heart.
I know Orsini's free, and now defy thy
Mercy and thy hate. [*Crosses*, L.

Arana. Defy me! What shallow bravery; what
Mockery is this? Knowest thou not, one word
Of his thou pretendest to despise can doom
Thee to the torture? Within these walls none dare
To question aught I do resolve. All here are
Slaves unto my will, and thou shalt not
Be more. I will bend
That haughty spirit, despite thy stubborn
Will, I'll—— [*Seizes her.*

Medora. Help! Unhand me, or——

Arana. Never! Promise to be mine, or by the
Fiends of darkness, all hope of mercy shall
Be closed unto thy prayers. [MEDORA *falls upon her knees.*

Medora. Unhand me, monster! Help me,
Heaven!

Arana. Swear to be mine!

Medora. Never!

Enter CARLO *and* STEPHANO.

Stephano. My lord! Arana—
The eastern tower's on fire. In one
Wild flame of red consuming ruin it soars
Aloft into the midnight air, and illumines all the
Darkness of the scene.

[*The conflagration seen through the windows of the banqueting hall. Shouts*, R. & L.

Arana. [*Releasing* MEDORA.] Confusion! Whence
Comes this treason? Ho! treachery's at
Work within these walls! How redly glare the flames.
Their heat oppresses, even here.

Carlo. Hasten, my lord! thy presence is
Needed. Wild distrust unnerves thy followers.

Arana. I come! I come!

[*Exit, followed by* STEPHANO *and* CARLO.

Medora. I thank thee, Heaven! [*She kneels.*] Here, amid the
Fearful glare of burning ruin, I thank
Thee; 'tis *Thy* hand that rescues the distressed. [*Rises.*
How wildly, madly leaps the fearful element.
Goes to the window. Shouts without, R.
Aye! shout, ye
Hirelings, shout! A sudden thought inspires me—
Escape amid the wild confusion. Aid me now, all
Powers divine! [*Goes to the door.*] 'Tis fast; barred
Without! Mercy! [*Goes to the windows alternately.*]
How lofty are these walls. Ha! the smoke
Comes through the casements and is stifling; the
Heat is great; the ——— Oh, horrid thought! what
If the fire reach this hall! what, if escape should be
Denied me! if all my efforts should be vain, and I
Perish in these flames! Orsini! Orsini! where art thou?
Some kind spirit aid me now! how fearful this
Death! To stifle mid this hellish din; the air seems
Thick, thicker, thicker! Oh, God! I choke! I—

(*Falls senseless. Loud shouts. Flames burning red within Casement.*

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—Outside the Walls of the Castle of Arana. Moonlight.

Enter Pietro *and* Orsini, L. U. E.

Pietro. Here cower we awhile, my lord, until Carlo
Comes, and brings us tidings of your lady's fate.
Orsini. Art sure of Carlo? If he betray his trust,
Then all is over—nothing's left me but revenge!
Pietro. Hist! what sound was that?
Orsini. What heard'st thou?
Pietro. 'Twas nothing—the loneliness of the hour and——
Orsini. Footsteps approach! Aside, and mark who
Comes! [*They retire up.*

Enter Carlo, R. U. E.

Carlo. Near this spot I was to meet Pietro,
And give him tidings of the Lady Medora.
This night's work would cost me my head,
Should Arana ever make discovery of my handy
Work therein. [Pietro *and* Orsini *advance.*
Pietro. Who's there?—Carlo?
Carlo. 'Tis I.
Orsini. How fares it with my love—my
Medora?—speak!
Carlo. She lives, and pines to meet her lord:
These were the words she bade me speak
To thee.
Orsini. And is she well, my friend, and free? or has the
Tyrant put fetters on the form I love? Are those beauteous
Limbs bedecked with galling chains? Tell me, I
Implore thee!
Carlo. My lord, the lady is free of dungeon or
Of chains, but all her acts are noted with a
Jealous care. She cannot wander from the
Space allotted by Arana to her movements.
Orsini. For this, I thank thee, Heaven! Nay, even
Thank my foe, who thus doth spare her. Now,
Friend, the news? What hour shall see our

Entrance in yon tower, as the avengers of suffering
Innocence and truth?

Carlo. To-morrow ev'ning, as the vesper-bell tolls the
Hour of parting day, be ready with a chosen band of
Thy followers. Collect them on this spot, and I will
Lead them through a secret winding-path, cut through
The battlements, and leading, through the bowels of the
Earth, to the very centre of Arana's stronghold.

Orsini. 'Tis well; at the hour thou namest shall
Thou find me here, all ready for the struggle.
My bravest followers shall accompany their chief, and
With thy assistance, my friend, we will accomplish
All the dearest wishes of my heart. No sleep shall
Bless my eyelids until then. I will not, cannot rest,
And the wildest hopes that ever racked a lover's breast
Are mine! Assist me, now, all powers that ever aided
Tenderness and truth! Guide me with your wisdom,
And nerve me with your might! Lead me through
Seas of blood—I care not, so they bear me to
Medora's arms!
Those walls shall totter to their base ere yon
Moon rises thrice again—in the same hour illume the
Scene. Love and vengeance—heroic themes!—
Herald me to conquest!—preserve me for Medora's sake!
And yet, a fearful pang doth shoot within my heart:
What if, when the vesper-bell resounds within these
Wilds, the hour be past and fled forever that could
Redeem Medora from the thraldom I deplore! what if
Arana should execute his threat, and, furious at
Delay, should bend that noble mind!—should,
By the brutal might of a reckless nature, inflict
Distress too fearful to be borne, or dreamed of, but
By lovers in their frenzy!
Arana! shouldst thou dare to follow up this villainy
By an odious act, there are no tortures in the plotting of
A fiend to match with those I ponder on, nor fire, nor
Poison of the deadliest roots, nor savage steel, nor
Any means, how fearful soe'er, to equal the
Horrors I will heap upon thy head! [*Crosses* R.

Pietro. Be calm, my lord. Sure fortune hath not in
The compass of her wide domain one spot where
Such accumulated wrongs could lie and rest secure.
Do not so misjudge the decrees of righteous Heaven as
Suppose—should such a sin as that Arana
Contemplates e'er reach its foul consummation—
A fearful penance will not fall upon the
Traitor's head——

Orsini. In vain, Pietro—'tis in vain thy

Kindness seeks to assuage my anguish! I could
Tear yon walls apart, and leave no living thing
Within them to bewail their fall! I'd hurl
Destruction on his head of a nature so direful,
That all future time shall shudder at the story of
My wrongs and my revenge!

Pietro. My lord, I entreat thy patience!

Orsini. Oh, patience! patience! ay, give me patience,
Heaven! Send me your aid to guide me now!
Preserve my senses, for woes like mine are fearful to
Endure! She is the dearest creature that a
Mortal ever worshipped, the goddess of
My idolatry!
Her desperate truth may yet do more than these idle
Hands can hope to achieve and avenge her
Yet unspotted honor, and I too late to save,
May compass nought but the death I promise to our
Foe! Oh! show me, Pietro, show me quickly some
Means to reach the goal I seek, the vengeance
I desire; and ask the greatest boon that friendship
Ever gave—it shall be thine. Dost hear me, Pietro?—
Dost understand these pangs that agonise my heart?—
These tortures that distraction give to love like mine?—
That know no hope, no relief, but in vengeance,
Unalloyed and sudden?

Pietro. My lord, the vengeance that thou seekest shall be
Thine. Doubt it not, for all the powers of goodness do
Espouse thy cause and battle on thy side.

Orsini. Grant it so, ye powers that o'ersway the
Acts of mortals! Grant innocence to be triumphant!
Let powerful guilt be levelled in the dust!
Then Earth will know one monster less, and
Virtuous love shall vindicate her right! Honor,
Justice, love, and truth, are all arrayed in this
Conflict against pride, power, and iniquity!
Sharpen my sword in the hour of battle, and nerve
This arm to val'rous deeds, which shall with a fatal
Haste hurl fierce destruction on Arana's head!

Carlo. My lord, time flies, and I must leave this
Place, and seek my post in yonder castle, ere
Knowledge of my absence shall arouse suspicion,
And the gloomy tyrant call me to answer, and
So, perchance, destroy the hope I've raised within your
Heart.

Orsini. I thank thee; farewell! be true,
And I'll reward thy faith.

Carlo. Thanks, my lord; farewell. [*Exit* CARLO, R.

Pietro. Let us now prepare the vassals for the struggle

Of to-morrow. Marco tells me that though death has thinned
Their numbers in the fight, still their spirits are unsubdued.

Orsini. Spartan heroes; for if bravery indomitable
Can give that title to a soldier, it is yours. I know your
Ardor, and revere your zeal. When in the dungeon
Of Arana, pining, how well I know that they did battle for my
Liberty; the freedom of a chief whom direst fortune
Could not lessen in their care
And love. The leader who has a place in the
Hearts of his soldiers, Pietro, is the owner of the strength
With which they shower their blows upon the foe.

[*Exeunt* L.

SCENE II.—The Camp of Orsini—Tents in the Distance—Soldiers Reclining on the Ground—Sentinels on Guard—Watch Fires, &c.

Enter Marco *and* Pietro, L.

Marco. When the vesper bell tolls, sayest thou, Pietro? Is that the
Hour for the assault?

Pietro. It is.

Marco. How fares my lord, my noble foster-brother; is
He well? Does hope keep lively in his breast, or has
Dull despair taken possession of those faculties his
Friends admire?

Pietro. No, not despair; but still, a nameless dread doth seem
To keep him from those cheerful thoughts methinks a soldier
Should possess upon the eve of strife. Should aught befal the
Noble lady of his love, victory were fruitless to his arms.
All his thoughts, and all his daring in the assault, will
Be Medora's. Thyself, Marco, must keep the guidance
Of our men, nor let one thought from that great end
Escape thee. Thy judgment and collectedness are
Proof against excitement's errors; and where the
Heart is calm the brain is ever cool.

Marco. I'll do my best, Pietro, the greatest chief could do
No more; and more I'd do than for myself I'd strive
To accomplish. Be this sufficient for my conscience
And for thy anxiety.

Pietro. Enough, my friend, I know thee well, and do not
Doubt thy valor or thy zeal.

Marco. So let this night be proof of both. Where does
Our chieftain wander forth ; for as I passed his
Tent it was empty.
Pietro. He broods alone, and doubtless seeks relief in
Thinking over his woes. How long this day will drag
along
Ere the welcome moments come when we shall battle
For his weal. Our forces are much thinned with those
Fierce assaults thou ledst against the towers of Arana.
Marco. They are, but still their souls are brave, and defy
The weakness of their limbs. I warrant me their swords
will be
Sharp and piercing in the work to come to-night. I know
No dread among them, and Arana's tower, taken by
Surprise, must fall before our efforts. We *shall* conquer.
Pietro. I know it, I feel it, Marco, in my heart, sure no
Righteous cause like this would fail. We well know all
The cruelties of Arana. He has no friends but those
Whose souls are slaves unto his whims, and every honest
Man must be his foe. Methinks for every pang our
Lord endured when bound within his dungeon, a gaping
Wound will let the gushing life from out his body
Ere another sun illumines nature's loveliness.
Marco. No fault of mine or thine, Pietro, if it be not as
Thou sayst. Still, we must not let an over confidence
Deceive us. Let no reckless assurances of success prevent
The very end we labor to attain. Caution and daring—let
These be our guiding stars, and with the assisting hand
Of heaven at our side, Arana's power will end—his very
Days be numbered. What joy to see oppression fall 'mid
Defeat and ruin. We'll give his castle to the flames,
And every serf that does not yield unto our conquering
Arms, we'll slay. No mercy will befit us then, Pietro, for
That's a virtue never known unto our foe, or
Ever offered to his enemies.
Pietro. True ; but unnecessary blood our chieftain shuns.
In that lies the gulf that separates cruelty from
Valor. In that lies the difference 'twixt Orsini's
Soul and Arana's dastard spirit. Let us even in
The hour of triumph emulate the generous victor
Who does not destroy, but would preserve his foe. For
We cannot but suppose some humane breasts pant
Beneath Arana's banner. 'Twere sad that these should
Suffer with the rest. And well I deem thy hand would
Be the last, my friend, to deal one wanton wound,
One pang that could be spared, even to thy bitterest foe.
Marco. True, true, Pietro ; but when we've seen with
Aching eyes, our friends destroyed in wanton cruelty, and

Our ears have drank their dying groans, we lose all
Sense of mercy to the foe who caused the suffering.
Pietro. Well, success unto our cause, for ours is the
Warfare of the oppressed. We fight for female
Loveliness and purity, enthralled within a tyrant's power.
Marco. But these to-morrow's midnight shall set free.
Pietro. I hope and trust in the goodness of our cause.
[*Enter* ORSINI, L.
But see, Orsini comes. Why dost thou ponder all
Alone, and dost not cheer thy followers for the
Coming fight, my lord? Dost dread the sequence
On't? or dost thou plot some easy plan of conquest
Yet to be divulged? Speak, sir, and cheer your vassals?
Orsini. Oh, friends! there is a fearful weight oppresses
Me! A sad foreboding. I never yet did shun the
Danger that I urged upon my soldiers, nor do I now.
I fear that all our efforts may be too late, and
That very thought unmans my nature. I know if
Such dread surmises should prove true, 'twould
Paralyze my arms and render feeble as an
Infant's all the strength I now can boast, and
Life itself would be a bitter boon. No, my friends,
Orsini has but one desire, one wish—to tear my
Dear bethrothed love from yon tyrant's power!
How vainly I repent the freedom I have gained, and
Wish again I pined in chains within the dungeon that
My foe assigned to my unwholsome captivity. There is no
Despair like that we feel for those whom we adore; and
Nothing doth unnerve the strength of manhood and
Stay the deeds his valor ponders on, as that sudden
Chilling of the heart that pales the cheek and
Arrest, the intended stroke, when fear that
What we strike to rescue is no more, benumbs the arm.
Marco. Cheer up, Sir! Your soldiers must not see this.
You must bear a cheerful countenance before them. 'Tis
Needed much in times like these. Let no distress appear
Upon thy brow nor cloud thine eye.
Orsini. Well, well. I *will* be cheerful. I will forget the
Cause that makes me thus. Forget! I cannot! As easy
Could the saddest victim of another's malice forget
All injuries, and forgive, although that victim
Had to pardon the foul destroyer of all his race!
I know this melancholy preys upon my heart. I cannot
Divine the cause of all the sadness and this brooding.
I mourn beneath an undefined load
Of grief. All nature is a blank of misery to
My eye. My brain seems turning with the long
Suspense, and direst thoughts do course athwart

My mind. I fear, yet know not what I fear.
I tremble at a shadow. A passing pang within
My heart at times, is like a death knell
In mine ear! What calmness or what hope
Can lighten my despair, when all I
Desire to see secure from distrust or danger,
Tempestuous fears and griefs are bowed beneath
A reckless libertine's fell regard, trembling at
His frown, and praying vainly for one glimpse of
Mercy that his nature knows not nor can know.

Marco. My lord, these dreads and doubts are
Worse than vain, they are fatal to your cause. Away
With gloomy despair! True hope can never know
Fatigue. It mounts aloft defiant of restraint, and
Victory is his whose daring foot would climb the
Highest pinnacle. No feebleness must find a place
Within ranks! No faintheartedness prevent the
Proud consummation of thy dearest wishes. We must
Achieve a conquest and destroy the foe, regardless
Of all cost and let my lord but clear his brow, and
Not a doubt remains within my soul, but that
Arana's doomed. So cheer thee, lord.

Orsini. Thy words would bring a comfort to my woe, if
Eloquence of mortal man could accomplish it, but
Marco, say no more! I will not trouble thee with further
Doubts. I will not recompense thy generous self-denial
And thy valor for my cause, by such ingratitude. I
No more deplore a fate I know not nor can plainly
Tell, but will drive it hence from my breast. Again
I'll lead my soldiers to the fight—and my willing
Sword shall leap, all joyous, from my scabbard
And defy the proud, exulting foe. Come on, my
Friends, let's cheerily wait the vesper bell, and
May its welcome sound awaken joy and
Triumph to our arms, and destruction to the enemy.
[*Turning and addressing the soldiers as they rise in groups*]
My gallant followers, who long have rushed where
Honor and your chieftain led, to-night shall lead you
To another conquest. Bright be your swords! avenging be
Their blows! Let your spirits be exalted with the strife.
Your
Limbs be nerved with a fiery vigor, no hostile power can
Stay. A righteous cause is that you fight—for a
Tyrant and a traitor to honor and knighthood
Is the foe, whom you confront. Then let his minions
Know your courage, and bleed upon your blades of shining
steel.

All. They shall—they shall!

Orsini. Remember your wives and sisters, and your
Promised brides. Ye fight for them! Remember
Outraged innocence, helpless maidenhood, feeble
And enthralled. Remember tyranny, and
Freedom! Arana's villany and Orsini's vengeance.
The victim turned avenger! forget not these, and when
Ye strike, strike home, and be your temples crowned
With laurels an eternity cannot wither!

All. Orsini! Orsini!

Enter two KNIGHTS.

1*st Knight.* My Lord! Orsini.

Orsini. Speak, thy will with me?

1*st Knight.* A force of the beleaguered foe has sallied
From the castle, and now approach the pass leading to
Our encampment; to surprise us do they come with secret
Strength and silent tread; an hour's march will bring them here.

Orsini. Then we must meet them, Marco!

Marco. My lord!

Orsini. Prepare for battle, every man that fights
Beneath my banners. We'll meet the audacious foe, who
Dares to hope he'll steal upon a slumbering host. By
Heavens, the thought of clashing arms inspires me with a cheerful
Spirit, and lends a fire unto my veins! Go, learn if their
Foremost ranks be now in view from yonder nearest
Height. [*Exit* 2*d* KNIGHT.] Come, my valiant vassals;
Prepare the thirsty steel, and dim its lustre in the
Flowing veins of foemen; this day's combat will
Begin ere your leader deemed. He scarce had hoped
For such a joyous chance. Claim victory as your
Right. Clutch it and 'tis yours; no delay when your ear
Shall catch the cry that commands ye make the
War your own. One gallant charge? swoop from these
Heights like eagles on their prey!

Enter 2*d* KNIGHT.

2*d Knight.* [*In haste.*] My lord, the foe has
Gained the pass; let the men march forward
And meet them ere they issue thence, and ere their
Senses can perceive the danger, hurl destruction on
Their heads!

Marco. My lord, these words are good ; by a sudden
Stroke we will o'erwhelm them. Now lets meet our—
Orsini. Then forward, friends ! Rush upon them, and
Destroy ! like bloodhounds, fresh from the leash,
Spring forward now ! [*Exit* ORSINI, R.

SCENE III.—A MOUNTAIN PASS.

Enter ARANA'S *Forces with Banners, Spears, and* STEPHANO *leading them, followed by two* OFFICERS, L. U. E.

Stephano. Halt ! [*Forces halt.*] Where are our scouts ?
1*st Off.* Not yet returned, sir.
Stephano. Strange ! this augurs ill, and sounds much
Like an ambush ; they should be here ere this, and
Bring us word of the exact force of the enemy, where
Lies their strength, and the surest point of assault,
Whence our men can rush upon and overwhelm
Them !
2*d Off.* This silence, too, amid these hills is ominous of
Some surprise intended by the foe. This—
[*Loud shouts without of* ORSINI ! ORSINI !
Stephano. What treachery is this ?
1*st Off.* The foe ! They come ! they come !

Enter forces of ORSINI, R & L., *hemming in those of* ARANA. *Music, shouts. Enter* ORSINI. *He rushes upon* STEPHANO, *they fight. General melee,* ORSINI'S *forces victorious.*

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Room in the Castle of Arana.

Medora *discovered kneeling at a shrine*, c.

Medora. [*Rising and coming down the stage.*] Thrice hath
Night's black mantle o'ershadowed the earth since
Orsini 'scap'd these walls ; and few and fearful
Have been my hours of repose since then ;
Arana seeks me ever and anon, and urges
The suit I loathe. Sure, the time draws
Near when I may hope for freedom from this
Thraldom, this killing torture of the soul ;
Every sound that comes up to these casements
Excites my heart to frenzy ; oh, had I not
Fainted in the stifling smoke that filled
You banquet hall, I had, perchance, been free
Ere this, and happy in the arms of him
My soul adores. [*Paces the apartment.*] Oh!
The agony of this suspense! Heaven! when shall
I find repose and peace?

Enter Carlo, L.

Well, speak: say what comfort has thy
Tongue to utter. Speak some words of
Solace, and I'll kneel to thee and bless
Thee!

Carlo. Lady, to-night, when the bell shall toll the
Vesper hour, I have agreed to lead the Lord
Orsini and his vassals through a secret passage
Known but to a few within these walls, where
And when they can possess them of the castle's
Strength, and crush the spoiler in the
Stronghold of his pride ;

Medora. Eternal powers be praised!

Carlo. Lady, be cautious and prepared.

Medora. Fear me not ; I have suffered deeply,
But am happy now. Thy words are Heaven's balm of
Comfort to this aching breast. My friend! My friend!
Receive a captive's thanks. [*Crosses*, R.

Carlo. Lady, I dare not linger; I must hence
Again. One word, one look, incautious said or given,
Would ruin all and seal thy fate; farewell,
Be cautious and be ready. [*Exit*, L.

Medora. Oh, bliss! oh, rapture! welcome, eve, welcome
The hour of deliverance and joy! Oh, Orsini! prosper him

All powers that pity feeble woman, all powers that
Aid distress and frown upon oppression ; may no
Mischance await him in the hour of strife ; no evil
Hand forbid his triumph ; shield him in danger ;
Preserve him for this beating heart to bless; [*Crosses*, R.
Ha! what sounds are those? the trampling of feet
Within the court—the sound of many voices
In confusion. What means these cries?
[*Shouts without.*

Re-enter CARLO, L.

Carlo. Lady, a sallying party of Arana's vassals
This morning stole upon Orsini in his
Camp, headed by Stephano, but were
Driven, with fearful slaughter and utterly routed, back.
Arana, wild with fury, like some savage
Beast, doth rave with fiercest oaths on all,
And even now gave utterance to thy name.
Medora. My name? What mean'st thou? Has
Some new species of torture entered his corrupted
Heart?
Carlo. I know not, but came to warn thee and
Pray thee to be calm and watchful for
The promised hour.
Medora. I understand thee, and thank thee, too.
Be still, my heart.
Carlo. I go, lady; again, farewell. [*Exit*, L.
Medora. Farewell, thou faithful servitor, farewell,
And mayst thou know, if ever fearful trials should
Beset thy path, a heart as true as thine to feel
For thee and aid thee in thy trouble.
Arana's vanquished host now throng the court and
Alley of this castle, and his fierce spirit chafes at
Their repulse. All the savagery of his nature
Will be roused within him, all the fury of the
Wolf will glare within his eye.
What if Orsini's valor fail him in the moment of
His need—if chance of battle should give the
Triumph to Arana's arms. Oh, that's a
Maddening thought. I will not cherish it an instant.
Hence, black delusions! ye cheat not this heart
Of one gleam of joy. I feel within me Orsini's own
Victorious soul. I do not doubt nor fear nor—

Enter ARANA, L.

Arana. Madam, I seek your presence to inform
You that the time expires to-night I've given thee.
Choose thy fate.

Medora. 'Tis well.
Arana. Hast thou decided, then?
Medora. I'll tell thee hereafter when the time thou
Hast allotted me, expires. [*Crosses*, L.
Arana. [*Aside*] Curses on her pride.
Medora, may I not hope thou wilt be merciful?
Why wilt thou thus be always harsh and cruel to a
Love, as tender as his who has forsaken thee?
Medora. If thou wilt not curb thy tongue of insults, wanton
As profane, I implore thee leave me to myself.
[*Crosses*, R.
Arana. Vain and foolish woman—nay pardon me, I
Meant not that, I did not intend insult, nor
Do I feel aught but passion and adoration
For thy charms. Not in the wide circumference of the
Globe breathes there the being I adore like thee. Heaven
Itself.
Medora. Oh, cease this idle talk, my lord; thou knowest
'Tis vain and hollow as the winds that murmur
O'er some barren waste. I cannot prize a heart
I do not covet; nor can I, with hideous guile, pretend
To offer hope of love, when all that I can give—
Arana. Is hatred! Perdition! Why, fool-like,
Do I suffer this, and let thee taunt me
Thus? Knowest thou not I have the power to bend
That haughty spirit? Hast thou forgotten in whose
Power thou art? In whose presence thou art standing,
And whose fury thou defiest? Remember, I
Hold thy liberty, thy life within my hand, and
Could hide thee from the eye of mortal man until
The final hour. Provoke me not; too much
Of that haughty spirit thou dost show for
Policy, fair lady. [*Crosses*, R.
Medora. But not for truth and love.
Arana. And well that truth and love of thine
Have been repaid. He deserted thee, as thou see'st,
and as——
Medora. Well thou knowest he has *not* deserted me.
He knows not the baseness of so mean a soul. He
Is peer unto ten thousand such as thee! I care
Not for thy frowns, nor for thy curses; thy threats
I fear not. I despise thy nature. Thy treacherous
Soul can nothing plot I dread to meet. Go,
Lord it o'er thy vassals and thy trembling slaves,
But seek not to subdue or terrify the generous
Heart of woman, when she loves. [*Crosses*, R.
Arana. By heaven, this gallant show befits thee
Well, and despite this bravery, thou shalt yet

Be his thou scornest. I swear it by all the
Powers of darkness. [*Advances as though to seize her.*

Medora. [C.] Beware! [*Drawing dagger and placing the point to her breast.*
Or this steel shall be my savior.
Approach *one* step, and the next thou
Takest will be toward my bleeding corse. My
Blood be on thy head.

Arana. Hold! hold thy desperate hand! I do relent,
And will seek some fitter time to urge my suit. [*Exit,* L.

Medora. Oh, mercy! mercy! [*Dropping her dagger-hand, and burying her face between her knees and sinking to the ground.*
Oh, my trembling heart support me! Do not
Forsake me now. Oh! grant me strength, ye
Powers that shelter the distressed, to live throughout
The fearful ordeal to which I'm doomed.
Soften the villain's breast and teach it pity. [*Rises.*
Oh, for some way to escape this horror; the
Vesper hour will never come; I will not longer
Tarry here; I cannot, dare not linger here.
Protect me, Heaven; guide me on the path I tremble, pursue.
Oh, for the fresh air of mountain freedom, the sylvan
Fruit of the verdant vale where birds and fruits and
Flowers and joy and peace shall be our own again.
One desperate effort; but if I fail—away despair!
I will not doubt the goodness of all-seeing Heaven.
Now for escape, now— [*Exit through door in flat,* R.

SCENE II.—A BRILLIANT APARTMENT IN THE CASTLE.

ARANA *discovered pacing the room in great agitation, and* STEPHANO *standing,* R.

Arana. Fled!—escaped me! curses on the slaves!
Treachery and an evil fate beset me on all sides.
Now, as I held joy to my lips, 'tis snatched from
Me, and I'm laughed to scorn, despised, derided and
Defied; but all who aided her in flight shall
Die in tortures no demons can conceive.
Who were—hast discovered yet the minions
That assisted her? Hast thou, too, been careless in the Search?

Stephano. All has been done, my lord; no pains been spared
To find the fugitive or aiders in her flight; scouts
Have left the castle, and between these walls and
Orsini's camp, no spot is left unsearched.

Arana. Yet all in vain?—why tell me this?—renew
The search! leave naught untried! penetrate
The camp itself! she must be found! and when
Found—what then? By all the fiends, if she
Again escape me. I forgive all ills that *e'er* before
Befell my race: Stephano!

Stephano. Your will, my lord?

Arana. My will?—fool! my will? 'tis this:
To hold Medora in my grasp, and defy all
Earth and earthly powers and Heaven itself
To rescue her! dost hear me, man? I tell thee,
Thou must bring her here!

Stephano. It shall be tried sir,

Arana. Tried! It shall be done, or on thy
Own head shall fall the doom I never yet
Pronounced in vain. Bring her before me, and
One half my wealth, one half my power are thine.
Fail to do so, and a thousand tortures shall
Reward thy lack of zeal, begone! I
Speak not twice! I am resolved.

Stephano. My lord, I go to execute your will. [*Exit*, R.

Arana. Oh place her in my power again, saints or fiends,
Bring her before me and I'll clip her wings for
All future flights.
Can she have reached Orsini? and does she laugh
My idle rage to scorn? Oh, idiot, idiot, that I was
To hold them in my power and let them fly
Me thus!

Enter STEPHANO, R.

Stephano. I give you joy, my lord.

Arana. How?—what?

Stephano. The lady—

Arana. Speak, what of her, Stephano?

Stephano. Has been recaptured and is now
Within these walls.

Arana. Recaptured, sayest thou? in my power
Again? Bring her before me; now revenge!
[*Exit* STEPHANO, R.
Now joy, I'm all your own, Ha! ha!
By Heavens, this exulting fire that courses
Through my veins is the delirious frenzy of
A maniac's rapture. I have her once again,
Once and forever. No pause, no hesitation,
No mercy now; she shall be mine in spite
Of virgin's fears and tears and curses.
She shall be mine!

For all the scorn I have endured at her
Hands, all the defiance of her lips and
Eyes, I shall be amply repaid.
Then let Orsini tremble ; he may despise my
Coward vassals. I conquer him in love ; the
Victory is mine! Oh! fates that rule my destiny,
I thank your guidance and your benevolence.
The maid—the haughty maid, that spurned my
Heart—shall be my slave.

Enter MEDORA, STEPHANO, *and four* KNIGHTS, R., 12.

Welcome again fair maid. Thy flight to reach
Thy flying lover, cruel fate decreed should be
In vain. Thou art doomed again by adverse fortunes,
Savage blasts, to find a haven in these towers.
I grieve to tell this, but truth, howe'er unwelcome
To the ear, ought not to be withheld. Again I bid thee
Welcome, lady.

Medora. Thy words of taunt and insult have
No effect upon this heart of mine. The depths of its
O'erbearing woe renders me all regardless of the utterance
Of thy lips.

Arana. Retire. [*Exit all but* ARANA *and* MEDORA, R.
Now, lady, we're alone. Let hopes thy bosom
Cherish'd, leave thee now ; no power that man
Can wield can save thee from my will. Again
I offer thee my hand in bonds of wedlock. Again
I offer thee the title of Arana's bride, the lady of
These wide domains—no answer? Dost thou spurn
This offer, or accept it? No trifling now can serve thy
Turn! A firm resolve is centered in my soul to call
Thee mine, by priesthood's aid, if thou consent'st
To be a willing bride ; if not, without it, then!

Medora. In calm disdain and virtuous pride I scorn
Thee, slave! Thou may'st lord it o'er thy vassals ;
Their suppliant knees may do thee homage, their
Pliant tongues, with hirelings huzzas laud
Thee and thy felon deeds! but from Medora's
Lips no word of meek submission comes to ears of
Thine ; and for my soul, contempt is all the
Feeling it conceives for thee. A traitor to honor
Thou stand'st, and infamy shall brand
Thy memory unto all coming time. May no comfort
Bless thee on thy dying day! alone mayst thou
Linger out a weary life of shame,
Despised by the meanest of mankind,
And scorn and hatred contemn thy name
Forever. [*Crosses,* L.

Arana. Enough! Beware! Thou art mine despite
Thy virtuous indignation. Rage fires my
Heart, and revenge claims thee for my
Victim. [*Shouts heard without.*
Ha! What means those shouts?

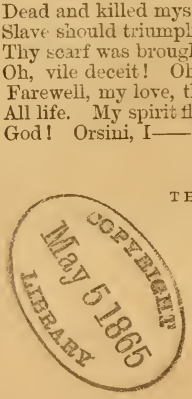
Enter STEPHANO, L.

Stephano. My lord, the castle is attacked.
These halls already swarm with thy foes.
Arana. Confusion! Whence comes this? What
New plot of treason's this?

Enter A KNIGHT, R., *with a crimson scarf in his hand.*

Knight. My lord, Orsini's slain! He led
Th' assault and fell pierced with wounds.
Here is the scarf he always wore in battle—
[*Gives it to Arana.*
Arana. A thousand thanks for news like this.
[*Exit* KNIGHT *and* STEPHANO.
Now then my triumph comes at last. Ho, there!
Without there! Keep back the slaves until——
Medora, thou art mine! I have thee now!
Expect no relenting mercy! Thou'rt mine!
Thou'rt mine!
Medora. Stand back! Eternal Powers receive me now!
[*As* ARANA *approaches her she*
Draws her dagger and stabs herself.] Ah,
Monster! Have I baffled thee?—and
Didst thou think a woman's hand could
Not preserve her honor!—Oh, God! I——[*Falls.*
Shouts without. Enter Orsini and faces R.
ARANA *stands aghast.*]
Orsini. Ho, villain! Perish! [*Stabs* ARANA *who falls and dies.*
What's this?—Oh, my Medora!
[*Seeing* MEDORA, *rushes to her and supports her.*]
Medora. Thou art not slain! I thought thee
Dead and killed myself, e'er yon
Slave should triumph, love,
Thy scarf was brought as proof of thy fall.
Orsini. Oh, vile deceit! Oh, devilish cunning!
Medora. Farewell, my love, this pang destroys
All life. My spirit flutters to depart! Oh,
God! Orsini, I——Farewell!— [*Dies.*

THE END.



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